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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 11 July 2012, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Khalil (Vice-President) ..... (Egypt)
Later: Mr. Arias (Vice-President) ..... (Spain)

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In the absence of Mr. Koterec (Slovakia), Mr. Khalil (Egypt), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

The role of the United Nations system in implementing the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2011 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council (*continued*)
(E/2012/64-A/67/82 and E/2012/66)

General debate

1. **Mr. Djacta** (Observer for Algeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that greater efforts were needed to ensure full realization of the right to education, as the essential basis for sustainable development, world peace, and the promotion of all human rights. Governments — which had primary responsibility for determining national social and economic strategies — must take the lead in adopting coordinated and integrated policies involving all stakeholders.

2. The United Nations system had an important role to play in maximizing capacities in implementation of internationally agreed goals and commitments in education, including those set out in the ministerial declaration of the Council's 2011 high-level segment. The Group called for improved coordination in support of national development priorities, with mobilization of resources to raise the profile of the international education agenda.

3. Barriers preventing access to education must be removed — social protection measures were needed to promote access by all. Education and training programmes focusing on skills development needed to be implemented to improve employability and so tackle the high levels of youth unemployment worldwide. The quality and relevance of post-primary education needed to be improved, by facilitating the transition from school to work through technical and vocational education and training programmes, apprenticeships and entrepreneurship education.

4. The Group called on the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), to enhance policy coordination and implementation in the context of the Education for All movement by strengthening regional and international partnerships and cooperation through the sharing of knowledge and good practice.

5. The international community must translate commitments into action and accelerate progress towards the implementation of education goals, in particular for developing countries. There was a need for strengthened commitments to official development assistance (ODA), as well as increased and predictable financial and technical support for capacity-building aligned with national priorities, to strengthen national education systems. Donors should formulate timetables for the achievement of official development assistance targets, so as to increase resources for advancing the international development agenda.

6. **Mr. Bhattarai** (Observer for Nepal), speaking on behalf of the Group of the Least Developed Countries, said that an educated, skilled and qualified population was the key to poverty reduction and sustainable development. In particular, education of girls brought about far-reaching change in society. While a number of developing countries — in implementation of the Education for All goals and Millennium Development Goals — were on track to achieve universal education and gender equality by 2015, progress in the least developed countries had not been sufficient, fast or sustainable, with many lagging behind.

7. Educational inequality was unrelenting, with many populations remaining non-literate and primary school graduation rates unsatisfactory despite improved enrolment rates. Enrolment in secondary, technical and higher education needed to be improved. The elimination of gender inequality was a distant prospect at the secondary and tertiary levels. Low-quality education, inappropriate training methods and a lack of economic opportunities had led to youth unemployment.

8. Education systems in the least developed countries were not capable of meeting the demands of the digital age, or of giving the labour force the skills needed in a rapidly globalizing world. Inadequate resources and infrastructure, a lack of supplies, and difficulties in reaching the most vulnerable children and youth had hampered progress. Education must be improved both quantitatively and qualitatively, and the international community must design more targeted strategies for children, women, youth and adults, especially those in disadvantaged situations.

9. There had been a sharp decline in official development assistance to least developed countries in 2011; donor countries should fulfil their ODA

commitments. The private sector and foundations should also provide more education financing. Global initiatives such as the World Bank's Global Partnership for Education could help to strike the right balance between donor "orphans" and donor "darlings".

10. The aims of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development must be implemented to ensure access to the quality of, and an end to gender disparities in education, and to achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development.

11. The Group of Least Developed Countries welcomed the Secretary-General's forthcoming Global Initiative on Education and commended UNESCO on its leading role in global educational development. A holistic approach was needed; the Group called on the international community to strengthen policy coordination and implementation in the context of Education for All, the Millennium Development Goals and other international educational development goals through enhanced partnership and cooperation.

12. Only if educational development in the least developed countries became the centre of global attention could high-quality, relevant and inclusive education for all be achieved by 2015. The post-2015 global development agenda must reflect the development priorities of countries with minimal capacity, and there should be greater support from the United Nations.

13. **Mr. Mathieu** (Switzerland) said that education was the essential foundation for the attainment of development goals. The progress made on access to education was heartening, but particular efforts needed to be devoted to quality. The concepts of educational access and quality could not be separated, because the financial crisis had shown the fragility of what had been achieved previously and because the neglect of access could aggravate social inequality.

14. Inclusive policies were needed to create linkages between basic education, vocational training and other non-formal and informal education models. An investment in education was an investment in peace, at far lower cost than the cost of conflict. Switzerland acknowledged the importance of access, quality and citizenship, the three priority areas of the Secretary-General's Global Initiative on Education. Education must be included in the post-2015 development agenda. The Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All offered an appropriate way forward.

15. Coordination mechanisms also needed to be overhauled to ensure consistent high-level political support, a strengthened, holistic approach to lifelong learning and economic and social goals, intersectoral political dialogue, and clear division of roles and responsibilities between actors. The new framework needed to be based on the principles of responsibility and broad participation, open to civil society and non-State actors.

16. Partnerships should be established in pursuit of national objectives, in the context of a regulatory framework embracing the international community as a whole, so as to focus efforts. Issues relating to trade in educational services and knowledge-sharing through information technology necessitated thorough consideration. The United Nations must provide a forum for high-level political dialogue, shape regulatory framework, and guide global advocacy and partnership, with UNESCO as lead agency. The question of whether or not there was general agreement regarding learning quality goals was the key to the Secretary-General's Global Initiative on Education.

17. **Mr. dos Santos** (Brazil) said that education played a fundamental and decisive role in sustainable development, poverty eradication and social inclusion. A systemic approach was required encompassing all aspects of education policy, including literacy programmes, in close partnership with civil society and the private sector.

18. His Government had greatly increased the resources available for education, in particular in areas with below-average investment per student, and a plan aimed at the inclusion of minorities, children with disabilities, indigenous people, Afro-descendant communities and students in rural areas was before Congress, with a view to expanding public investment in education from 4.5 per cent of gross domestic product to 7 per cent by 2020.

19. Over 95 per cent of Brazilian children were now enrolled in primary schools, while access and quality disparities had been reduced. Much remained to be done, however, and the Government had undertaken to evaluate results transparently and objectively in partnership with school administrators.

20. Brazil shared the international community's sense of urgency in the promotion of international education development goals, and commended the Education for All initiative and the Secretary-General's Global Initiative on Education. There could be no single solution to educational challenges, however, and each country needed to define its own priorities. Partnerships, including South-South partnerships and triangular cooperation, were crucial in complementing domestic resources and strategies, particularly in poorer countries — solidarity was in the common interest of the international community.

21. **Ms. Haaland** (Observer for Norway) said that children in areas affected by crisis and conflict were not benefiting from the overall progress being made on Millennium Development Goal 2, on universal primary education. In such areas, international legal provisions protecting schools were often violated, and Norway therefore welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict (A/66/782-S/2012/261), which had for the first time included groups attacking schools and hospitals in the list of parties responsible for specific grave violations against children.

22. The provision of education in conflict zones was challenging but not impossible. Lessons learned needed to be shared and brought into mainstream thinking. In Nepal, for example, schools had been declared zones of peace, through negotiations between local communities, Government agencies, the military and Maoist forces, thus rendering education safe, sustainable and peace-promoting even during conflict.

23. Support for education during humanitarian crises contributed to the protection of children and could prevent them from becoming child soldiers or victims of violence. Schools could provide normality and peace in unstable situations, and the avoidance of interruptions in children's education contributed to a faster recovery from crisis. His delegation welcomed the establishment by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies of education as a key component of emergency response, and the development of quality measures to ensure the right to education of children and young people affected by conflicts and emergencies. Donors and implementing agencies should focus more on education in their humanitarian work.

24. He welcomed the fact that education was one of the Secretary-General's priorities for his second term, and looked forward to the launching of the Global Initiative on Education. The global education agenda required a commitment on the part of all Governments to education for all children. Although the economic downturn was forcing reductions in public expenditure, education was key to a prosperous future. In the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda, interaction, the sharing of lessons learned and the proposal of workable solutions for the realization of Education for All would be vital.

25. **Ms. Chartres** (Australia) said that investment in education was the single most effective way of reducing poverty. Even basic reading skills would lift many millions out of poverty. Despite increased access to and improvements in the quality of education and learning outcomes, 67 million children were still out of school, with girls, children from rural areas and conflict-affected countries, and disabled children, particularly badly affected.

26. The commitments made to high-quality, relevant and inclusive education for all by 2015 must be met. Programmes with a positive effect on school attendance and retention and learning outcomes must be accelerated and expanded. Strategies for making education available to marginalized groups must be supported.

27. As the key to economic growth, education was the flagship of Australia's aid programme. Australia was one of the largest bilateral donors in the education sector, and provided support for school construction, curriculum development, teacher training and inclusive education. It was investing in basic, early childhood, non-formal and secondary education, and in technical and vocational training, as well as skills development for young people.

28. Australia's $270 million multi-year support for the Global Partnership for Education was a clear indication of its commitment to the enhancement of partnerships, and it also supported the Civil Society Education Fund launched by the Global Campaign for Education.

29. The United Nations and its partners must help countries to improve learning outcomes so that children and youth could gain the basic skills necessary for productive lives. Enhanced coordination between Governments, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector was needed, as were regional partnerships for knowledge exchange and efficiency gains, and innovation through information and communication technologies.

30. *Mr. Arias (Spain), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

31. **Mr. Rivard** (Canada) said that basic education was fundamental in reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development. In that regard, education partnerships were vital in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All goals, and in giving young people more access to learning opportunities. The Global Partnership for Education was key to accelerating progress in that area in low-income countries; it constituted the pre-eminent global mechanism for fostering policy dialogue, promoting aid effectiveness, and focusing on the achievement of results. Canada strongly supported its policy priorities: girls' education, learning outcomes and fragile States.

32. The United Nations Girls' Education Initiative had catalysed global action on girls' education, particularly for the most marginalized, removing such barriers to learning as school fees and violence. The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies was the lead international partner ensuring that children and youth had access to quality education and safe learning environments in emergency situations and in conflict-affected and fragile States. It fostered global policy dialogue and identified good practice, codified in its Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction. New collaboration across multiple sectors, in particular education, health and nutrition, was crucial to holistically addressing child and youth development. Canada was committed to facilitating such partnerships, for example in the area of school feeding, and would engage with new partners, including in the private sector.

33. **Ms. Prorok** (Ukraine) said that education played a crucial role in the definition of sustainable development goals. There had been important advances in the context of the Education for All movement in terms of coordination of national, regional and global activities.

34. Strategic alliances were needed to improve youth education opportunities and satisfy the demand for a skilled labour force. Strengthened collaboration was needed to ease the transition from education and training to the world of work. She welcomed the Secretary-General's identification of education as a building block of society; it should form a major priority over the next five years. The increased focus on actual learning, and not mere participation in educational processes, and the use of information and communication technologies were trends which needed further consideration by the United Nations in the definition of post-2015 sustainable development goals.

35. Ukraine had traditionally scored well on basic education indicators. The Government had recently initiated new programmes in preschool education, introduced information technology in secondary education, and expanded vocational training, and was formulating draft legislation on higher education intended to make the education system competitive with the best in Europe.

36. **Ms. Fastame** (Argentina) noted the importance of full implementation of the 2011 ministerial declaration. It was necessary to agree on strategic themes and agendas for achieving the Education for All goals and Millennium Development Goals by 2015, and to establish conditions conducive to agreement on post-2015 priorities. The work of United Nations agencies should focus on strengthening educational support systems through, in particular, analyses and diagnostics, programme and policy design and implementation, process validation, incentives and subsidies, and monitoring and evaluation. Technical assistance should take account of national and subnational contexts. Coordination and cooperation among the bodies responsible for the Education for All movement should be strengthened.

37. Millennium Development Goal 2 on universal primary education must be attained. Secondary education was compulsory in Argentina, and it was important for children with special needs to be integrated into the system. Recognizing that education was a basic human right, Argentina had supported various regional and international education initiatives, with a view to the formulation of a World Programme for Human Rights Education, including at the primary and secondary levels.

38. **Ms. Larios** (Mexico) said that the 2011 ministerial declaration laid emphasis on the importance of access to education by all, with participation by all sectors of society. In order to guarantee the right of all to education while helping developing countries to improve quality and focus on learning, unprecedented international and inter-agency cooperation was needed,

in which regard the Secretary-General's Global Initiative on Education would add new impetus. States had a particular responsibility to focus on factors causing marginalization, such as gender, age, location and disability, and one of Mexico's priorities was to guarantee human development and well-being through equal opportunities. The aims of the 2007-2012 National Development Plan were to reduce regional, gender and social inequality, broaden coverage, encourage equality and improve the quality and relevance of higher education.

39. Given the effects of the financial crisis on efforts to meet education goals, consideration should be given to the design of development policies that would allow consolidation of the gains made since 2009. The United Nations, and the Council in particular, was the nerve centre for discussion of economic policy; the Organization must emerge all the stronger from the challenge. Education was not only a fundamental human right, it was a catalyst for the attainment of all other objectives.

40. **Mr. Kogda** (Burkina Faso) said that, since 2000, the international community had made significant strides towards achieving the Education for All goals, owing to the efforts of United Nations agencies and increased government investment in education. Africa had made good progress in accelerating education enrolment for girls and boys, in particular at the primary level, and a number of African countries had achieved gender parity in primary schools. According to the report entitled "Overview of economic and social conditions in Africa, 2012" (E/2012/17), primary enrolment rates rose significantly between 1999 and 2009, with net enrolment in Burkina Faso increasing by 25 per cent over that period.

41. Nonetheless, several obstacles still hampered progress towards universal enrolment by 2015, including poor teaching, shortage of teachers, classroom overcrowding, high dropout rates, the low number transitioning from primary to secondary education, low enrolment in rural areas, mismatch between skills taught in school and the requirements of the labour market, and poor management within the educational system. To accelerate achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, his Government had developed a national literacy strategy to improve the skills required to support growth.

42. Burkina Faso welcomed the growing efforts of the United Nations system in the field of education, especially the Secretary-General's decision to make education one of the priorities of his second term, and looked forward to the launching of the Global Initiative on Education. It also favoured the idea of partnerships, including public-private and decentralized partnerships, in support of national, regional and international strategies aimed at accelerating progress towards the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 2 on universal primary education, and related goals.

43. **Mr. Valero Briceño** (Observer for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that governments had an ownership and leadership role to play in setting education policy strategies, plans and goals, and were accountable to society in that regard. Education was a public good, not a business, although the private sector also had a role to play in the sector, as it did in Venezuela. The Education for All initiative proposed by the United Nations involved public, free and universal education. UNESCO had declared Venezuela free of illiteracy, with growing participation by the population in all levels of education.

44. Like other countries of the South, Venezuela had been affected by the global crisis. However, standards of living had been maintained, with positive trends in social investment, education, health, employment and the overall economy, owing to its countercyclical policies. The procyclical policies recommended by the International Monetary Fund, which were based on cuts in health and education spending, reductions in wages, pensions and social security in general, and layoffs, had produced growth without welfare. They had given rise to humanitarian disasters around the world, in both the North and the South, leaving many educated young people unemployed and taking to the streets to protest the violence caused by neo-liberal policies.

45. It was regrettable that developed countries were not fulfilling their international commitments and were not transferring the necessary funds for the financing of development and poverty reduction. Venezuela would continue to defend education in all international forums for the advancement of human rights, the environment, peace, solidarity and democracy.

46. **Ms. Cousens** (United States of America) said that the United States remained committed to promoting

access to quality education and building practical partnerships to that end. It remained actively committed to expanding educational opportunities around the world and would invest more than 1 billion dollars in education in 2012. In 2011, the United States Agency for International Development had launched a new education strategy in pursuance of three global education goals: improved reading skills for 100 million children in primary grades by 2015; improved ability of tertiary and workforce development programmes to produce a workforce with relevant skills to support country development goals by 2015; and increased equitable access to education in crisis and conflict environments for 15 million learners by 2015. In recognition of the need to engage a wider range of stakeholders and partners in twenty-first century education systems, the strategy would rely heavily on developing partnerships with governments, civil society, the private sector and the United Nations system.

47. The United Nations should continue to play a crucial role in strengthening education as a broker of partnerships and adviser on the establishment of effective education policies and strategies. Its role as a forum for the sharing of knowledge and best practices was particularly noteworthy. In that regard, the United States welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the role of the United Nations system in implementing the internationally agreed development goals and commitments in regard to education (E/2012/66). While the report contained a thoughtful analysis of trends and key gaps and placed considerable emphasis on data, it should have included more finer-grained data disaggregated by gender, locality, ethnicity, age, disability and other factors. Nonetheless, her delegation was pleased that the report mentioned the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality Initiative, which served as a vital tool in that regard. It also welcomed the Secretary-General's Global Initiative on Education, which should help to increase cooperation among United Nations agencies and consolidate their work in the field of education.

48. **Mr. Medrano** (World Food Programme) said that the World Food Programme supported the global education agenda, which advocated inclusive quality education through school feeding. In 2011, 330 million children around the world had received a daily meal or snack in school, mainly from their Governments, but with the help of the World Food Programme. School feeding enhanced access to and quality of education, boosted school enrolment and attendance rates, and contributed to education outcomes by providing children with the energy and micronutrients they needed to stay healthy and reach their full learning and cognitive potential.

49. Following the economic and financial crises of 2008, which had raised global awareness of school meals as a social protection intervention measure and a tool for safeguarding advances made in education, the World Food Programme and the World Bank had intensified their collaboration to support the transition to sustainable school feeding programmes that were owned and resourced nationally.

50. For many countries, the expansion of resilience support — including school meals and nutrition programmes — was essential for sustainable development. In Haiti, where climate emergencies and volatile food prices made it impossible for many people to feed their families, the World Food Programme had undertaken the "Milk in abundance" pilot project, working with partners to purchase sterilized milk for distribution to schoolchildren. The Focusing Resources on Effective School Health Initiative allowed the World Food Programme to work together with the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Bank to promote more-child-friendly schools through health-related school policies.

Coordination, programme and other questions

(a) Reports of coordination bodies
(A/67/16; E/2012/67)

51. **Mr. Stelzer** (Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs), introducing the annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2011/12 (E/2012/67), said that the report demonstrated how the Board and its three pillars — the High-level Committee on Management, the United Nations Development Group and the High-level Committee on Programmes — had advanced policy, operational and management coherence and coordination by the United Nations agencies within their intergovernmental mandates.

52. A key priority for the Board had been to develop system-wide contributions to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in

order to support Member States' efforts to advance economic growth, social development and environmental sustainability in an integrated manner. In November 2011 and April 2012, the Board had issued two joint statements to provide substantive input to the Rio+20 preparatory process. At the Conference, it had organized a high-level event bringing together the Secretary-General and 19 executive heads in a demonstration of the United Nations system's collective capacity to promote integration and coherence of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

53. Over the reporting period, the Board had continued its work on follow-up to the 2010 High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals, prepared the Millennium Development Goals Acceleration Framework and launched the Integrated Implementation Framework. It had accelerated the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues in the work of the United Nations system by developing tools, instruments and processes to step up coordinated system-wide actions in such areas as human rights and disaster risk reduction. It had also endorsed the system-wide action plan for implementation of the United Nations policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women, a unified gender framework designed to promote common understanding, enhanced coherence, systematic self-assessment and a progressive approach to gender mainstreaming.

54. The High-level Committee on Programmes had continued its system-wide coordination efforts with regard to climate change, support for least developed countries, population dynamics and demographic transformations. To strengthen coordination and coherence in providing input to intergovernmental meetings and conferences, the Committee had addressed the issue of joint contributions by United Nations system entities to the 2013 High-level Dialogue of the General Assembly on International Migration and Development and to follow up the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014.

55. The High-level Committee on Management had continued to respond to demands for enhanced efficiency and service delivery on the part of the United Nations system with a view to improving business models and making management and administrative processes more coherent and compatible across the system; generating cost efficiencies while improving the quality of delivery; and introducing the cultural changes required to modernize the working environment. The Committee had also continued its consideration of the safety and security of United Nations system personnel while ensuring that security risk management enabled programme delivery.

56. To show the relevance, leadership on normative issues and capacity to do more with less of the development system, the United Nations Development Group had focused on joint United Nations system preparations for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development. The Group had also begun to reflect on the contours of a post-2015 development agenda, without overlooking the need to continue to support achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

57. Coordinated action was essential for the United Nations system to meet global challenges. The Chief Executives Board for Coordination was committed to ensuring that the system fulfilled the mandates established by Member States.

58. The Board had been engaged in efforts to do more with less as a follow-up to calls from legislative and governing bodies and to the Secretary-General's five-year action agenda. With regard to cooperation with other intergovernmental bodies, the Board continued to work closely with the Joint Inspection Unit on the development of the Unit's annual work plan and in the preparation of reports. The International Civil Service Commission also regularly contributed its views before the High-level Committee on Programmes. Over the reporting period, the United Nations system had benefited from increased interactive dialogue with Member States. The Board had held regular briefings with, inter alia, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, as well as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference in Durban. It had also striven to enhance the quality and quantity of information provided in official reports and on its website, redesigned for 2012.

59. **Mr. Dugan** (United States of America) said that the Chief Executives Board for Coordination had made significant strides in driving policy coherence throughout the United Nations system. Its joint preamble to the individual submissions of agencies, funds and programmes underscored the deep commitment of all organizations of the system, including the Bretton

Woods institutions, to act together in advancing greater integration and coherence of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

60. His delegation commended the Board for supporting the action plan for the implementation of the United Nations system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women; for its decision to regularly include human rights issues and agendas in the work of the High-level Committee on Programmes; and for the briefings it held with Member States in response to the Economic and Social Council's call for enhanced dialogue with the Board and entities of the United Nations system. The United States also welcomed the launching of the Integrated Implementation Framework web platform, which would incorporate measures to enhance accountability and coherence in tracking progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

61. He commended the Board for the informal presentations to Member States on progress by the High-level Committee on Management in promoting efficiency, harmonization and simplification of business practices in the United Nations system. Such presentations outlined the ways in which the different parts of the Board worked across programme, management and development issues, including country-level implementation issues, to establish a stronger management and programmatic framework. They also highlighted the importance of sharing best practice to leverage the wealth of knowledge and experience in cost-effectiveness available within the system.

62. Lastly, his delegation welcomed the recent efforts to design high-quality United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks based on close coordination among United Nations agencies and host Governments.

63. **Mr. dos Santos** (Brazil) said that his delegation welcomed the Board's work in support of the Rio+20 Conference and in promoting the safety and security of United Nations personnel. The Board had a significant role to play in fostering the exchange of best practice in the areas of management and budgeting. The United Nations system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women was a positive example of coordination efforts led by the Board.

64. While the Board had made a commendable effort to demonstrate transparency and accountability in its work, it must deepen its dialogue with Member States and provide more information on agreements and memorandums of understanding with different parts of the United Nations system. Although the Board's role was to advance the priorities set by Member States, some initiatives and measures mentioned in its report, such as UN-Oceans, had yet to be endorsed by any intergovernmental body and should be submitted for intergovernmental approval before implementation.

65. His delegation deeply appreciated the Board's efforts to improve the coherence, coordination and effectiveness of the United Nations system. In that regard, he wished to know how the Board would enhance the United Nations Development Assistance Framework preparation process.

66. **Mr. Rahman** (Bangladesh) wished to know how the Board planned to improve the integration of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 into the programme activities of United Nations agencies. He also asked how the Board was addressing the results of the partnership survey in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, which showed that United Nations agencies, far from advancing the system-wide development agenda through coherent, coordinated and cooperative action on the ground, were seen to be in competition with one another.

67. Lastly, he asked about the Board's reaction to the concern expressed in "delivering as one" pilot countries that the headquarters of United Nations agencies were still operating in silos rather than delivering as one.

68. **Mr. Rodríguez Hernández** (Cuba) sought reassurance from the Board that the development-related mandates of its agencies were not being diluted, and that the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (A/67/16), including the need to ensure that activities and initiatives were in line with intergovernmental mandates, would be implemented.

69. **Mr. Stelzer** (Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs) said that the Integrated Implementation Framework had been introduced by the Secretary-General as a means of clarifying the status of the political, technical and financial pledges received from Member States and other stakeholders following the 2010 Millennium Summit. It was still a work in progress and could be tracked on the Framework's website.

70. UN-Oceans was an effort by the Board to provide input to assist the Secretary-General in preparing for the Rio+20 Conference; it was not meant in any way to weaken the oceans' legislative framework. Member States would be kept abreast of any developments. With regard to improving the United Nations Development Assistance Framework preparation process, one of the purposes of the United Nations Development Group was to bring United Nations system-wide decisions to the country level, and vice versa. There was no one-size-fits-all approach, and the Board was working with partner countries to ensure that lessons learned from specific examples could be replicated elsewhere.

71. Country teams would play a major role in the implementation processes that had started at Rio+20. The Board played only a secondary role in monitoring implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, a process that was led by other entities, including the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review was also a work in progress. Entities of the United Nations system were making progress towards abandoning their silos and delivering as one, as attested by the fifth High-level Conference on Delivering as One, held in Tirana in 2012.

72. The Board agreed fully with the Committee for Programme and Coordination's recommendation that activities and initiatives should be in line with intergovernmental mandates. It also took its responsibility of transparency very seriously by briefing Member States not only when they requested it but also proactively.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.